IN THE CLAIMS:

1   1.   (Cancelled).

1   2.   (Currently Amended)   A mail piece tracking system including:

2   A.   one or more servers that perform the operations of:

3   i.   acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal services or delivery

4   companies, and ~~from said information~~ creating ~~a digital shadow~~ linked information for each

5   mail piece containing at least one of: information about the mail piece, delivery status

6   information, address and delivery particulars, a digital copy of the mail piece, a summary of

7   the mail piece, and an excerpt from the mail piece;

8   ii.   ~~delivery status information and~~ associating said linked ~~linking the mail piece delivery~~

9   ~~status~~ information with respective user identifiers, thereby ~~informing the user of an incoming~~

10   ~~mail piece~~ providing the user with the capability to track and trace mail pieces sent to or from

11   one or more addresses;

12   ~~ii.~~iii   receiving one or more messages from the senders of the respective mail pieces and

13   linking to ~~the~~ delivery status information an attachment consisting of the one or more

14   messages from the senders of the mail pieces; and

15   ~~iii.~~iv.   ~~producing on a user's personal web page~~ providing said linked information ~~listings of~~

16   ~~the delivery status information~~ for the mail pieces directed to or sent from respective users

17   that are associated with the user identifiers; and

18   ~~iv.   including links to the respective messages in the listings of the delivery status~~

19   ~~information allowing the user to perform at least one of: sending or receiving a message,~~

20   ~~receiving or paying a bill, and verifying information based upon a digital signature; and~~

21   B.   one or more browsers or client executables through which the respective users

22   associated with the user identifiers access ~~the delivery status~~ linked -information. ~~and the~~

23   ~~links to the respective messages.~~

1   3.   (Withdrawn) A mail piece tracking system including:

2   A.   one or more servers for linking mail piece delivery status information with user

3   identifiers, associating with the delivery status information for a given mail piece related

4   transaction information, producing listings of the delivery status information for mail pieces

5   directed to the respective users, and including a link to the transaction information in the

6   listing of the delivery status information;

7   B.   one or more browsers or client executables through which the respective users

8   associated with the user identifiers access the delivery status information.

1   4.   (Currently Amended) A mail piece tracking system including:

2   A.   one or more servers that perform the operations of:

3   i.   acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal services and

4   delivery companies and creating a ~~digital shadow~~ _linked information_ for each mail piece

5   containing delivery status information and linking the mail piece delivery status information

6   with respective user identifiers, thereby informing the user of an incoming package;

7   ii.   _generating a personal web page for a user providing_ ~~receiving~~ _said linked_ information

8   relating to the contents of the respective mail pieces from the senders of the mail pieces and

9   displaying said information on ~~a~~_said_ user's personal web page and linking to the delivery

10 status information an attachment consisting of the information relating to the contents of the

11 respective mail pieces;

12 iii.   producing on said user's personal web page respective listings of the delivery status

13 information for mail pieces directed to _or from_ respective users that are associated with the

14 user identifiers; and

15 iv.   associating the information relating to the contents of the respective mail pieces with

16 the mail piece delivery status information in the listings; and

17 B.   one or more browsers or client executables _running on a user's personal computer or_

18 _at another workstation at which the user may log in, and_ through which the respective users

19 associated with the user identifiers access the delivery status information and the_ linked_

20 information relating to the contents of the respective mail pieces.

1   5. – 6. (Cancelled).

1 7. (Withdrawn) A mail piece tracking system including:

2 A. one or more servers for linking mail piece delivery status information with user

3 identifiers producing listings of the delivery status information for mail pieces directed to the

4 respective users, and including in the mail piece delivery status information:

5 i. a sender identifier,

6 ii. a mail type identifier,

7 iii. a delivery service identifier, and

8 iv. links to on-line information provided by or associated with the sender.

1 8. (Cancelled)

1 9. (Withdrawn) The method of tracking and tracing mail pieces of claim 10 wherein

2 A. the step of linking mail piece delivery status information to the user identifiers

3 includes updating the information, and

4 B. the step of providing a listing of mail piece delivery status information includes

5 providing in the list the updated information.

1 10. (Withdrawn) A method for tracking and tracing mail pieces including the steps of:

2 A. associating respective users with user identifiers;

3 B. associating with the identified users mail pieces directed to or sent by the respective

4 users;

5 C. linking mail piece delivery status information relating to the respective mail pieces to

6 the respective user identifiers, the delivery status information including information that

7 identifies the senders of the respective mail pieces that are directed to the identified users;

8 and

9 D. providing to a given user a listing of the respective mail pieces and the mail piece

10 delivery status information that is linked to the user identifier that corresponds to the given

11 user.

1   11.   (Withdrawn) The method of tracking and tracing mail pieces of claim 10 wherein the

2   step of linking mail piece delivery status information with the user identifiers includes

3   associating therewith messages from the respective senders.

1   12.   (Cancelled).

1   13.   (Withdrawn) The method of tracking and tracing mail pieces of claim 11 wherein the

2   step of linking mail piece delivery status information to the user identifiers includes

3   associating therewith messages from the respective delivery services.

1   14.-19. (Cancelled).

1   20.   (Withdrawn) A method for tracking and tracing mail pieces including the steps of:

2   A.   associating respective users with user identifiers;

3   B.   associating with the identified users respective mail pieces directed to or sent by the

4   respective users;

5   C.   linking mail piece delivery status information relating to the respective mail pieces to

6   the respective user identifiers, the mail piece delivery status information including the source

7   of a given mail piece; and

8   D.   providing to a given user a listing of the respective mail pieces associated with the

9   given user and the mail piece delivery status information that is linked to the user identifier

10   that is associated with the given user and further providing a graphical interface connected to

11   notify the given user of the delivery status of the respective mail pieces, the interface being

12   configured to display information concerning the source of a given mail piece.

1   21.   (Currently Amended)   Computer executable instructions embodied in a computer

2   readable medium, the comprising instructions causing the computer to perform: the steps of:

3   A.   associating respective users with user identifiers;

4   B.   acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal service and

5   delivery companies, about a mail piece and associating that mail piece with a user identifier;

6   C.   ~~and~~ creating ~~a digital shadow~~ linked information for each mail piece containing mail

7   piece ~~delivery status~~ information providing the user with the capability to track and trace

8   mail pieces sent to or from one or more addresses;

9   ~~C.   associating with the respective users mail pieces directed to or sent by the respective~~

10   ~~users and informing the user of an incoming mail piece;~~

11   D.   receiving ~~mail piece delivery status~~ linked information from one or more mail piece

12   delivery companies and ~~linking~~ associating ~~the mail piece delivery status~~ linked information

13   relating to ~~the~~ those respective mail pieces that are assigned to the respective user identifiers

14   that are associated with the users to which the ~~mail pieces~~ user identifiers are associated;

15   E.   receiving information concerning the contents of the respective mail pieces from the

16   senders of the respective mail pieces;

17   F.~~-~~   ~~and~~ displaying said linked information ~~an~~ on a user's personal web page ~~and linking~~

18   ~~to the delivery status information an attachment~~ consisting of the information concerning the

19   contents of the respective mail pieces; and

20   ~~F~~G.   providing on said user's personal web page a graphical user interface adapted to

21   notify the respective users of the delivery status of the respective mail pieces, the interface

22   being configured to:

23   i.   provide the mail piece delivery status information that is linked to the user identifiers

24   that are associated with the respective users, and

25   ii.   provide to the respective users the information concerning the contents of the

26   respective mail pieces.

1   22.   (Currently Amended) Computer executable instructions, embodied in a computer

2   readable medium, ~~the~~ comprising instructions causing the computer to perform: ~~the steps of:~~

3   A.   associating respective users with respective user identifiers;

4   B.   acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal services and

5   delivery companies, and creating ~~a digital shadow~~ linked information for each mail piece

6   containing mail piece delivery status information and associating the linked information with

7   said user identifiers;

8   C.   associating with the respective users <u>identifiers</u> respective mail pieces directed to or

9   sent by the respective users and informing the user of an incoming mail piece;

10   D.   receiving mail piece delivery status information from one or more mail piece delivery

11   companies and displaying said information on a user's personal web site and linking the

12   mail piece delivery status information relating to the respective mail pieces to the respective

13   user identifiers that are associated with the users to which the mail pieces are associated;

14   E.   receiving images of at least a portion of the contents of the respective mail pieces

15   from the respective senders and displaying said images on said user's personal web page and

16   linking to the delivery status information an attachment consisting of the images of at least a

17   portion of the contents of the respective mail pieces; and

18   F.   providing to respective users listings of the respective mail pieces and the mail piece

19   delivery status information that are linked to the user identifiers that correspond to the

20   respective users; and

21   G.   providing on said personal web page a graphical interface connected to:

22   i.   notify the respective users of the delivery status of the associated

23   respective mail pieces; and

24   ii.   provide to the users the images of at least a portion of the contents of the respective

25   mail pieces.

1   23.   (Currently Amended)   <u>The computer executable instructions as defined in Claim 22</u>

2   <u>further comprising:</u> ~~Computer executable instructions embodied in a computer readable~~

3   ~~medium, the instructions causing the computer to perform the steps of:~~

4   ~~A.~~   ~~associating respective users with respective user identifiers;~~

5   ~~B.~~   ~~acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal services and~~

6   ~~delivery companies, and creating a digital shadow for each mail piece containing mail piece~~

7   ~~delivery status information;~~

8   ~~C.~~   ~~associating with the users respective mail pieces directed to or sent by the respective~~

9   ~~users and informing the user of an incoming mail piece;~~

10 ~~D.   receiving mail piece delivery status information from respective mail piece delivery~~

11 ~~companies and linking the mail piece delivery status information relating to the respective~~

12 ~~mail pieces to the respective user identifiers;~~

13 ~~E.   receiving images of information associated with respective mail pieces from~~

14 ~~respective senders and linking to the delivery status information an attachment consisting of~~

15 ~~the images of information associated with respective mail pieces;~~

16 ~~F.   providing to respective users listings of the respective mail pieces and the mail piece~~

17 ~~delivery status information that are linked to the user identifiers that correspond to the~~

18 ~~respective users; and~~

19 ~~G.~~ providing a graphical interface connected to:

20 ~~i.   notify the respective users of the delivery status of the associated respective mail~~

21 ~~pieces;~~

22 ~~ii.   provide to the users the images of information associated with the respective mail~~

23 ~~pieces; and~~

24 ~~iii~~ provide links for the user to ~~senders~~ respective mail piece delivery companies and

25 respective sellers of said mail pieces allowing the user to perform at least one of: sending or

26 receiving a message, receiving or paying a bill, and verifying information based upon a

27 digital signature.

28

1   24.   (Currently Amended) The computer executable instructions of claim ~~23~~ 22 in which

2   one or more messages from the senders or the mail delivery companies are received and the

3   interface is further configured to provide the one or more messages associated with the

4   respective mail pieces.

1   25.   (Withdrawn) A method for tracking and tracing mail pieces including the steps of:

2   A.   associating respective users with respective user identifiers;

3   B.   associating with the identified users respective mail pieces directed to or sent by the

4   respective users;

5   C.   linking mail piece delivery status information relating to the associated respective

6   mail pieces to the respective user identifiers, the mail piece delivery status information

7   including one or more links to information provided by senders of the respective mail pieces;

8   and

9   D.   providing to a given user a listing of the associated respective mail pieces and the

10   mail piece delivery status information that is linked to the user identifier that corresponds to

11   the given user and providing a graphical interface connected to notify the given user of the

12   delivery status of the associated respective mail pieces, the interface being configured to

13   provide one or more links to the information provided by a sender of a given mail piece.

1   26.   (Withdrawn) The method of tracking and tracing mail pieces of claim 25 wherein the

2   information provided by the sender includes one or more of transaction history, account

3   balance, and payment option information.

1   27.   (Cancelled).

1   28.   (Currently Amended) Computer-readable memory comprising computer program

2   instructions for use in providing mail piece tracking and tracing, the instructions when

3   executed causing:

4   A.   one or more servers to:

5   i.   acquire information from one or more mail piece sources, postal services and delivery

6   companies, and creating ~~a digital shadow~~ linked information for each mail piece containing

7   mail piece delivery status information and associating said ~~link~~ linked information about the

8   mail piece ~~delivery status information~~ with respective user identifiers to thereby inform the

9   user of an incoming mail piece, providing the user with the capability to track and trace mail

10   pieces sent to or from one or more addresses;

11   ii.   receive messages from the senders of the respective mail pieces and adding to said

12   linked information ~~link to the~~ delivery status information and an attachment consisting of the

13   messages from the senders of the respective mail pieces,

14   iii.   produce for a user, a personal web page including listings of the ~~delivery status~~ linked

15   information for mail pieces directed to the respective users that correspond to the user

16   identifiers; and

17   iv.   provide in said user's personal web page ~~links~~ access to the messages in the listings

18   of the delivery status information; and

19   B.   one or more browsers to provide to the respective users associated with the user

20   identifiers access to the listings of the ~~delivery status~~ linked information and the ~~linked~~

21   messages.

1   29.   (Currently Amended) The c~~C~~omputer-readable memory as defined in Claim 28

2   further comprising: ~~computer program instructions for use in providing mail piece tracking~~

3   ~~and tracing, the instructions when executed causing:~~

4   ~~A.~~   said one or more servers being configured to:

5   i.   ~~acquire information from one or more mail piece sources, postal services and~~

6   ~~delivery companies and creating a digital shadow for each mail piece containing mail piece~~

7   ~~delivery status information and link the mail piece delivery status information with~~

8   ~~respective user identifiers to thereby inform the user of an incoming mail piece;~~

9   ~~ii.   receive sender transaction information from respective senders of the mail pieces and~~

10   ~~link the sender transaction information to the delivery status information;~~

11   ~~iii.   produce on a user's personal web page listings of the delivery status information for~~

12   ~~mail pieces directed to the respective users that correspond to the user identifiers; and~~

13   ~~iv.~~   associate ~~the links to the~~ with the linked information, transaction information with the

14   listings of the delivery status information on said user's personal web page allowing the user

15   to perform at least one of: sending or receiving a message, receiving or paying a bill, and

16   verifying information based upon a digital signature.~~; and~~

17   ~~B.   one or more browsers to provide access to the delivery status information linked to a~~

18   ~~given user identifier and also to links to the transaction information that associated with the~~

19   ~~delivery status information.~~

1 30.   (Currently Amended) The c~~C~~omputer-readable memory as defined in Claim 28

2 further comprising: ~~computer program instructions for use in providing mail piece tracking~~

3 ~~and tracing, the instructions when executed causing:~~

4 ~~A.~~   said one or more servers being configured to:

5 ~~i.   acquire information from one or more mail piece sources and delivery companies and~~

6 ~~create a digital shadow for each mail piece containing mail piece delivery status information~~

7 ~~from respective mail delivery companies and link mail piece delivery status information with~~

8 ~~respective user identifiers to thereby inform the user of an incoming mail piece;~~

9 ~~ii.   receive information relating to the contents of the respective mail pieces from the~~

10 ~~respective senders and link to the delivery status information an attachment consisting of the~~

11 ~~information relating to the contents of the respective mail pieces;~~

12 ~~iii.~~   produce listings of the mail piece delivery status information for mail pieces directed

13 to the respective users that correspond to the user identifiers; and

14 ~~iv.~~   include in the listings the information relating to the contents of the respective mail

15 pieces; and

16 ~~B.   one or more browsers to provide access to the delivery status information linked to a~~

17 ~~given user identifier and further to provide access to the associated information relating to the~~

18 ~~contents of the mail pieces.~~

1 31.   (Cancelled).

1 32.   (Withdrawn) Computer-readable memory comprising computer program instructions

2 for use in providing mail piece tracking and tracing, the instructions when executed causing:

3 A.   one or more servers to

4 link mail piece delivery status information with user identifiers, the delivery status

5 information for a given mail piece including

6 i.   a sender identifier,

7 ii.   a mail type identifier,

8 iii.   a delivery service identifier, and

9 iv.   related messages from the sender and the delivery service, and

10 v.   produce listings of the delivery status information for mail pieces directed to the

11 respective users that correspond to the user identifiers; and

12 B.   one or more browsers to provide access to the delivery status information linked to a

13 given user identifier

1   33.   (Cancelled).

1   34   (Withdrawn) A method of operating a computer system, the method including the

2   steps of:

3   A.   associating a given user session with a user identifier;

4   B.   retaining messages relating to the status of the session at a server and including in

5   each message a message sequence number and an attribute that is associated with the user

6   identifier; and

7   C.   using the messages to continue the session from a point at which the session last

8   communicated with the server, in response to the user identifier being presented at a node

9   that communicates with the server.

1   35.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 34 further including a step of maintaining an

2   index of the messages, the index being sorted by the attribute that is associated with the user

3   identifier.

1   36.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 further including:

2   A.   a step of communicating through the session and providing information

3   relating to a mailing label;

4   B.   in the step of retaining messages retaining messages that include the

5   information relating to the mailing label;

6   C.   in the step of continuing the session presenting the retained information

7   relating to the mailing label; and

8   D.   a step of ending the session by printing the mailing label in accordance with

9   the retained information.

1 37. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 36 further including:

2 A. in the step of communicating through the session providing information

3 relating to postage for a mail piece;

4 B. in the step of retaining messages retaining messages that include the information

5 relating to the postage;

6 C. in the step of continuing the session presenting the retained information relating to

7 the postage; and

8 D. in the step of ending the session printing the postage in accordance with the

9 retained information.

1 38. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 35 further including:

2 A. a step of communicating through the session and providing information

3 relating to postage for a mail piece;

4 B. in the step of retaining messages retaining messages that include the information

5 relating to the postage;

6 C. in the step of continuing the session presenting the retained information relating to the

7 postage; and

8 D. a step of ending the session by printing the postage in accordance with the

9 retained information.

1 39. (Withdrawn) A method of operating a computer network including the steps of:

2 A. associating a user session with a user identifier that is presented to gain

3 access to information maintained by the network from a first node that communicates with

4 the network;

5 B. retaining a queue of messages relating to the user session and associating the

6 queue with the user identifier; and

7 C. in response to the user identifier being later presented at the first node or a

8 second node that communicates over the network, continuing the user session at the first or

9   second node by using the messages to present the session at the point at which the session

10   last communicated with the server.

1   40.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 36 wherein the step of retaining a queue of

2   messages includes indexing the messages by the user identifier.

1   41.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 37 wherein the step of retaining a queue of

2   messages further includes maintaining the queue at each of a plurality of interconnected

3   nodes, a given one of the interconnected nodes at which the user identifier is provided

4   presenting the user session at the point at which the session last communicated with the

5   server.

1   42.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 38 further including conducting the user session

2   by communicating over the network using a browser or a client executable.

1   43.   (Withdrawn)   The method of claim 37 wherein the step of presenting the user

2   identifier includes providing a machine-readable code to a scanner that communicates with

3   the node.

1   44.   (Withdrawn)   A method of operating a postal service computer system, the method

2   including the steps of:

3   A.   associating a given user postal mailing label session with a user identifier;

4   B.   retaining messages relating to the status of the session at a server and

5   including in each message a message sequence number and an attribute that is associated

6   with the user identifier, the messages further including mailing label information provided

7   through the session; and

8   C.   using the messages to continue the session from a point at which the session

9   last communicated with the server by presenting the mailing label information provided

10 through the session, in response to the user identifier being presented at a node that

11 communicates with the server.

1 45.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 44 further including a step of maintaining an

2 index of the messages, the index being sorted by the attribute that is associated with the user

3 identifier.

1 46.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 45 further including the step of ending the

2 continued session by printing the mailing label in accordance with the retained

3 information.

1 47.   (Withdrawn) The method of claim 46 further including

2   A.   in the step of retaining messages retaining messages that include the

3 information relating to postage;

4   B.   in the step of continuing the session presenting the retained information

5 relating to the postage; and

6   C.   in the step of ending the session printing the postage in accordance with

7 the retained information.

1 48. (New) A mail piece tracing and tracking system comprising:

2   one or more servers associated with multiple package delivery systems coupled to

3 a network, said one or more servers interfacing with a database storing user identifiers,

4 and said one or more servers associating a user identifier with linked information about

5 packages that are being sent to or from a user of the system using said package delivery

6 systems, said linked information being associated with one or more user identifiers; and

7   a plurality of nodes connected by said network to one or more of said servers,

8 said nodes running software executables that communicate directly with the server, said

9 nodes also having access to web browsers allowing the user to login in and inspect linked

10   information about each package that has been assigned to its user identifier providing the

11   user with the capability to track and trace mail pieces sent to or from one or more

12   addresses.